



## TESTIMONY FOR HB0515 REAL PROPERTY – CANDIDATES – ACCESS TO APARTMENT BUILDINGS

**Bill Sponsor:** Delegate Palakovich-Carr  
**Committee:** Environment and Transportation  
**Organization Submitting:** Maryland Legislative Coalition  
**Person Submitting:** Cecilia Plante, co-chair  
**Position:** FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB0515 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

Our Coalition members support many candidates for local, state and federal office. Many of them knock on doors for candidates. However, there are certain areas where they can't door knock. Canvassing in and around apartment buildings is currently prohibited.

When we can't canvass apartment buildings, who are we not getting to talk to? Census data shows that a majority of Black and Hispanic residents rent, whereas roughly 70 percent of whites own their home. So, we are missing many of our black and brown residents.

Since people living in apartment buildings will not get to hear from candidates, or their surrogates, they won't get to understand how a candidate will react towards their issues or support their point of view. That lack of knowledge disenfranchises people in apartments. People don't vote if they are not sure of who to vote for.

This bill, if passed, will allow people living in apartment buildings to have access to the same level of communication from candidates as those who live in houses or townhomes.

We believe this is vitally important to our participatory democracy. We support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.